



HEADS UP

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Details of our 4 projects:
- Heritage Mental Health Project.
- RIAP - Recovery Independent Advocacy
- Help the Homeful.
- The Beatitude Project.
- Volunteering for RECOVERY.
- Awareness of recovery in Mental Health.

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Recovery - Charity for Mental Health

Who we are

We are a new Mental Health Charity called **RECOVERY**.

The name was born out of our research into the history of Mental Health. A good percentage of survivors can completely recover from their 'mental illness' to the extent that they have no symptoms at all. This empowers past-users so they are not compelled to take medication but can lead a normal life.

We started a self-help group in July 2004 called **Rutland Healing Group**. **RECOVERY** Project Leader Lizzie Maitland, 53, lived in Oakham, Rutland at this time. She wanted to do something to

campaign for freedom from compulsion and to stop stigma and discrimination in Mental Health. The first open meeting was held at the Voluntary Action Rutland Offices



RECOVERY trustees at a meeting, March 2009.

and was supported by MIND. Initially meetings were held monthly with Meditation sessions and guest speakers on Complementary and Alterna-

tive Remedies (CAR).

Since July 2005 we applied for funding for the Heritage Mental Health Project. We were successful in July 2007 when Comic Relief gave us enough to pay a project leader and a researcher. This enabled us to work with volunteers to research the archives at Wigston Record Office.

At **RECOVERY** we provide advocacy for Mental Health. **RIAP** (Recovery Independent Advocacy Project) supports survivors on the psychiatric wards and in the community in their pursuit of justice. We have also established **The Beatitude Youth Project** that aims to go into schools and **The Homeful Project**.

Changing Mental Health History

RECOVERY is the first self-help group in England to start up a charity. If we had a charity for Mental Health over the past 300 years there would be no discrimination.

We aim to change views on Mental Health through education and debate.

Everyone has a mental health problem but we do not see it as an illness. It is just a way of coping.

When survivors are given the opportunity to be supported in their grief, anger, shock, fear or stress, rather than labeled and medicated, then recovery

is possible. These emotions should be expressed and dealt with by therapies and remedies rather than stifled with psychiatric drugs. All of our projects are to change the face of Mental Health to enable survivors to have capacity to choose the best for themselves.

Understanding Causes by Looking at History



Progress In Our Age Exhibition and Committee members

The Heritage Mental Health (HMH) project, run by **RECOVERY**, aims to advance the education of the public on the subject of mental health and to promote the physical and emotional conditions of people suffering in Leicestershire and Rutland.

Through the provision of support, education, advocacy and practical counselling we also aim to reduce

stigma and discrimination in the area.

In 2007-2008 we held an exhibition on the history of mental health in Leicestershire called 'Progress In our Age' also accompanied by a book and users/past users life stories.

This project has encouraged understanding of the causes of mental problems, the ways it can be treated and various paths to recovery. It also aimed to target where the stigma around the subject originated as in the Middle Ages madness was never seen as an illness.

By researching the archives of Wigston record office from November-March 08, with help from a researcher

and volunteers, we discovered a direct link between well-being, spirituality and mental health issues. The exhibition was held in a number of locations around Leicestershire and Rutland including churches, museums and libraries.

HMH has raised awareness on the historical treatment of patients throughout its heritage to the present day. It has enhanced people's understanding of mental health issues as well as highlighting progress.

The heritage of treatment instigates fear in those with an illness, HMH seeks to readdress, modernise and dispense of those fears.

“Madness has, in our age, become some sort of lost truth”
David Cooper

Survivors are Empowered with a Voice

Purpose

RIAP's aim is to empower people to have the capacity to choose the best outcomes for their Mental Health recovery in the community.

Its objectives are to visit survivors on and off the ward and enable their views and needs to be listened to and acted upon. The group is limited to self-referral to allow survivors to be responsible for their own choice of action.

Our scope includes Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland and our advocates support survivors in hospital and in the community with

active listening. We also use centering therapy and knowledge of complementary and alternative remedies to encourage survivors to choose their own targets and goals.

Ethos for Independence

RIAP is independent from Leicestershire Partnership Trust (LPT) and will not have a Service Level Agreement with them until their service provided is in line with our ethos.

RECOVERY needs freedom from compulsion, open wards, and each member of LPT staff to allow every patient to have the capacity to choose the best treatment

for themselves.

The project respects that advocates and survivors have a purpose in life so we strive to ensure that we work as a team, in honour preferring one another, where there is as little conflict as possible between each other and LPT staff.

Putting survivors first

Advocacy means survivors are empowered to have a voice. Advocates encourage Leicestershire Partnership Trust to enable survivors to have control. Volunteers should be non-judgemental and respectful of people's aspirations to achieve and attain well being.

“RIAP would like to have better access to hospital wards and is working with directors and managers of LPT in view of this”
Lizzie Maitland

Centering Therapy for Well-Being in Schools



ASSEMBLY: improving ethos

The Beatitude project is a project aimed at young people with mental health problems.

We will go into schools with the support of the six world religions in Leicester to do collective acts of worship.

Lizzie Maitland, 53, a teacher says: " the behaviour of students in schools has deteriorated since assemblies lost their spirituality ethos."

In **RECOVERY's** research we have found a link between spirituality and Mental Health.

The activities will include one to one active listening , centering therapy, workshops on the history of Mental Health and groups to promote coping strategies. We believe in being proactive, this is important in recovery.

We believe there is more to recovery than medication.

Medication has many side effects such as weight gain, confusion and increase or decrease in libido which in turn leads to exploitation, further depression and low self-esteem.

Being sectioned on a mental health ward for a young person, can be daunting. We will empower young people with the essential life skills that can encourage well-being and Mental Health.

Self-Help Groups for the Homeless

The Homeful Project aims to work with churches in Leicester to start up emergency accommodation overnight in Church halls.

A similar project organized successfully by West London Churches Night Refuge Shelters use sleeping mats.

Self-Help homeless groups will provide advocacy support to find housing.

We hope to work closely with Action Homeless, a charity in Leicester that has 7 hostels and 2 resettlement units.

We help the 'homeful' to fill out application forms and support them with interviewing techniques. Our volunteers will befriend and mentor each other.



MODERNISATION?:
19th Century night refuge

Volunteering for Recovery.

Recovery charity is organized and run by volunteers so we are always looking for more help with our work.

The following are comments and experiences of helpers. Viv Addey, 58, chairperson of the Recovery project said: "A large number of survivors have been helped by the project in many different ways

since it started and with this expansion, this numbers should rise".

The Beatitude project development worker Malaika Parvati Mahadev, 29, said: "I find the sessions allow me to feel at peace with myself and help steady my mind and make it more focused."



PEACE: centering therapy session

The vice chairman of Recovery's management committee Sudana Edwards, 63, said: "As a Buddhist I have found centering prayer to be a good guide to wisdom."



Contact Us to become a volunteer:

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Oadby
Leicester
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Heritage Mental health Project.
Lizzie Maitland 07932433148

Recovery Independent Advocacy Project.
Helen Halst 07984197232

Beatitude Project.
Malaika Mahadev
07833018977

Homeful Project

Chairperson and Project Leader's Comment

Viv (Chairperson) met Lizzie (Project Leader of RECOVERY) at Radio Leicester in October 2007 when recording material for World Mental Health day.

Viv became involved with the research for the books and exhibition at Wigston Record office. She attended the launch of 'The Progress In Our Age' Exhibition at Guildhall in April 2008 and read her 'Survivor's Story'.

After a while Viv started to go to the Trustees' meetings and at the AGM in July 2008 was voted Chair of RECOVERY.

Lizzie and Viv encourage you to become involved to help find ways to recovery in Mental Health.



Lizzie Maitland and Viv Addey, 2009



ESCAPE: Community of Saint Claire retreat October, 2008

Finding ways to Mental Health

Sort the Symptoms or Cure the Cause?



Malaika Mahadev, a past-user of Mental Health services looks at the effects of medication

Medication can prevent symptoms but does it really cure the root of the problem? I feel communicative therapies are needed alongside medication as well as alternative medicine.

There needs to be more promotion of available facilities and how to access them. A greater workforce of psychologists, counsellors, cognitive behaviour therapists, psychotherapists, nurses and social workers is needed along with shorter waiting lists.

Some medication for Mental Health conditions can cause low self-esteem and depression.

The medication may appear to work on the surface but does it cure the underlying cause? Medication can also lead people to be exploited, weak, dependant and vulnerable.

Preventative measures such

as early intervention at schools, in early childhood and the workplace may help.

More research on better drugs with less side effects is needed as well as more access and less gate-keeping to psychoanalysis and complimentary alternative medicine. Medication does work sometimes but it is only one piece of the jigsaw in a person's mental health recovery.

There are many other 'pieces' to the jigsaw. Advocacy is one example of this. Everybody is entitled to an advocate by law now so always ask. They can help inform you on your rights, choices and options in a hospital situation.